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# Blokzyl named manager of Bradford County Airport

BY JAMES LOEWENSTEIN (STAFF WRITER)

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ARTICLE TOOLS

Heather Blokzyl, who has been the interim manager of the Bradford County Airport since October, has been hired to fill the position permanently.

At their most recent meeting, the Bradford County commissioners voted to transfer Blokzyl from interim manager of the Bradford County Airport to manager of the airport.

"She's worked at the airport around six years, and she has a degree in airport management," said Mark Smith, chairman of the Bradford County commissioners.

While there were only a few applicants for the job, Blokzyl "was certainly the most qualified," he said.

Blokzyl replaces Carl Lafy, who had been manager of the airport since approximately 1989.

Lafy retired from his position as airport manager in October, Blokzyl said.

"I'm excited" about being named airport manager, Blokzyl said. "This is something I went to school for. This is something I've looked forward to for a very long time."

Prior to being named interim airport manager, Blokzyl was the secretary at the airport.



Blokzyl has associate's degrees in accounting and business management from Lackawanna College, and a bachelor's degree in aviation management from Everglades University in Boca Raton, Fla.

The hands-on experience she gained while working at the airport is important preparation for her new job, said Bradford County Commissioner John Sullivan. It's "something you can't teach at college," he said.

"I've proved I can do the job," said Blokzyl, citing her six months' experience as the interim airport manager. "Everybody seems very pleased that I've taken on the position."

Blokzyl's appointment as airport manager is effective April 4, 2011.

She will be paid \$18.01 per hour and will work 40 hours per week.

"Carl did a very good job of mentoring me," Blokzyl said. "He knew that eventually this (managing an airport) is what I wanted to do."

Lafy said he was of the founding members of the Towanda Area Joint Municipal Airport Authority, which was formed by the five municipalities that surround the airport in 1986 and which worked to implement a master plan for improving the airport.

It was around 1989 that the Federal Aviation Administration told the authority that they would receive no grants for improving the airport, unless there was an airport manager at the facility, according to Lafy. It was at that time that Lafy was named airport manager.

Lafy later resigned from the authority when he formed Northern Tier Aviation, which was a flight school and an aircraft mechanic shop.

In the years that Lafy has been airport manager, there have been numerous improvements at the airport, including the construction of a longer, 4,300-foot runway; a new terminal building; two new parking areas for aircraft; and hangars and fueling facilities.

During the time that Lafy had been airport manager, the name of the authority that owns and oversees the airport was changed from the Towanda Area Joint Municipal Airport Authority to the Bradford County Airport Authority. Its members are now appointed by the Bradford County commissioners.

The airport is located in Towanda Township.

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Jessy Duke 5 days ago

Very proud of you Heather! Awesome job!

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